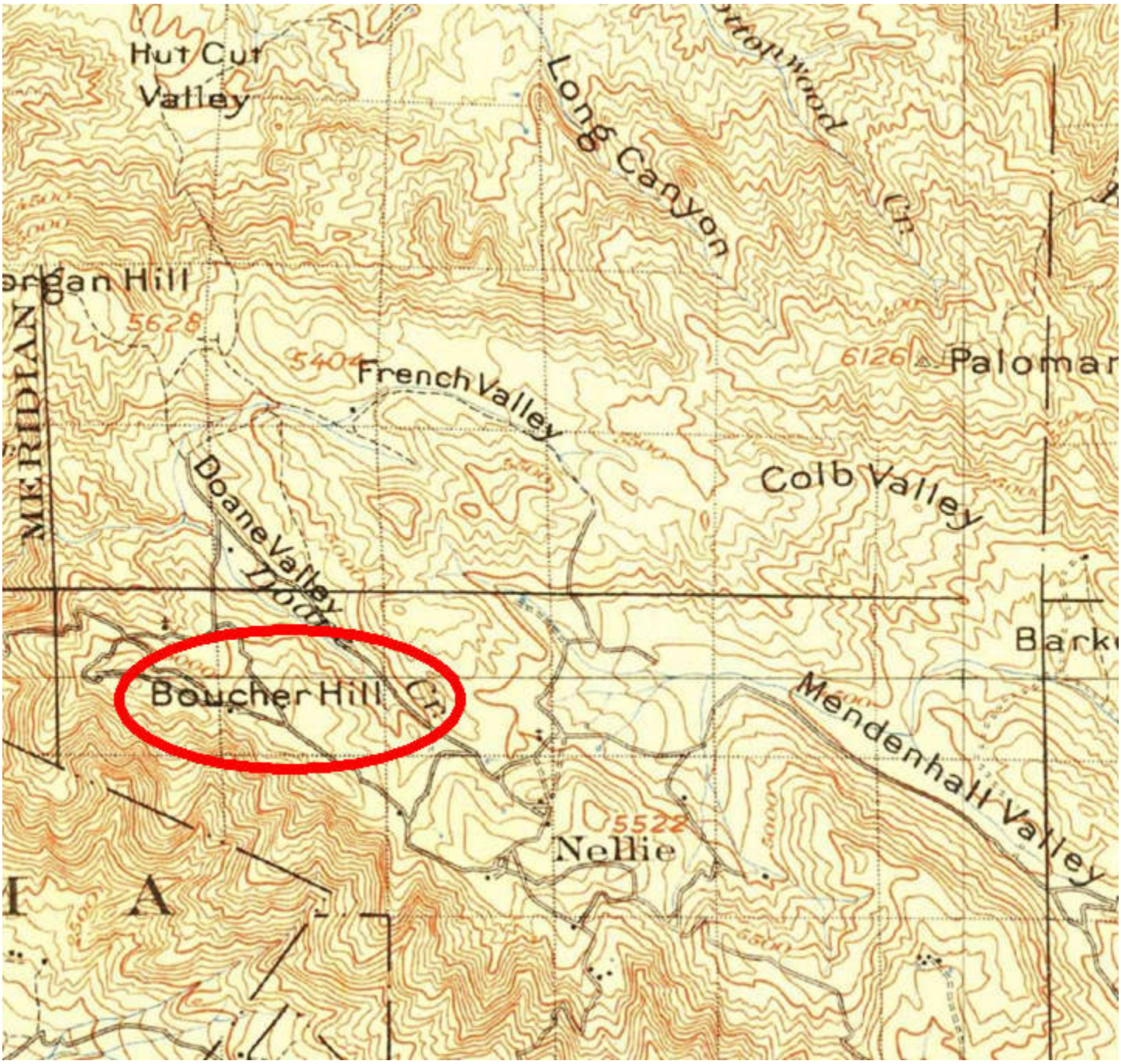
William E. Bougher and Boucher Hill on Palomar Mountain

Peter Brueggeman, 2026

Information and photograph sources in this biography are cited **except** for ancestry.com, familysearch.org, and findagrave.com; therefore, an uncited fact or photograph came from those sources. Property records were not researched; the properties noted are listed in the Bureau of Land Management's General Land Office Records database or found in newspaper notices.

Though spelled differently, Boucher Hill on Palomar Mountain is named after William Ellsworth Bougher (born in Ohio on September 13, 1863; died in San Diego County on January 17, 1956).



Boucher Hill on USGS 1903 Ramona map

William Ellsworth Bougher was married to Ida W. Pearson, the daughter of **William Henry "Big Willie" Pearson** (born in Indiana on October 22, 1832; died on Palomar Mountain on December 8, 1898).

William Henry Pearson, 1870s-1880s

Given the disparity among family trees on ancestry.com, it is difficult to sort out William Henry Pearson's children.

In 1851, William Henry Pearson married Nancy Pickering (1829-1874), and their children were Cerilda/Serilla Jane (1853-), Albert Clarkson (1855-1914), Loretta Maria (1857-1906), and Phineas William (1860-), Arlauda Edgar (1861-1870), Lena May (1862-1948), Lewis Harvey (1865-1951), Lee W. (1866-1946), Laura Belle (born in Kansas on May 5, 1868; died in Oakdale, California on December 27, 1936), Julius Levi (1868-) and Ida W. (born in Kansas on February 27, 1870; died in San Diego on April 10, 1931). He was a farmer living with his family in Iowa at the time of the 1860 U.S. Census. His wife Nancy Pickering Pearson died in 1874.

In the 1875 Minnesota state census recorded in May, William Henry Pearson was living with his child Ida W. (1870-1931) and his future second wife Abigail Caroline George (1841-1920); they were married in Anoka, Minnesota on January 13, 1876. William H. Pearson and his second wife Abigail were recorded in Kansas for the 1880 U.S. Census, along with Lena May, Lewis, Laura Bell and Ida W. They were recorded in an 1885 Kansas state census with his children Lewis, Julius, and Ida.

William Henry Pearson moved to California after that 1885 Kansas state census.

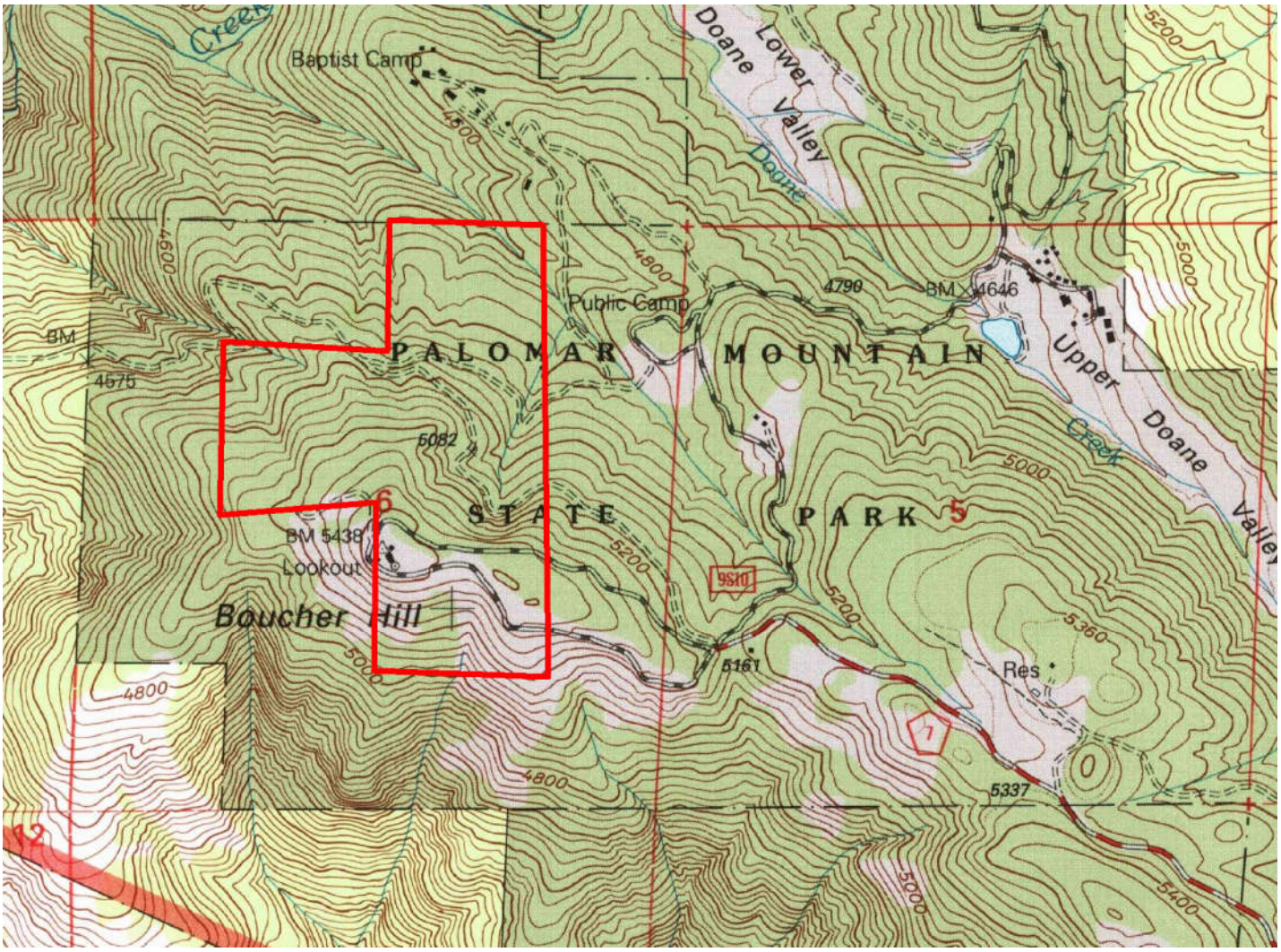
William H. Pearson, an apiarist living in El Modena, California registered to vote on March 29, 1888, and he was registered to vote in Orange, California on September 25, 1888. By 1892, he was living on Palomar Mountain.

Marion Beckler writes [1]:

> **William Pearson** had homesteaded in [1892], to raise bees. His daughter, **Laura (Mrs. John) Reddy**, and family came soon after and homesteaded at the north, beyond Doane; his son-in-law, **William E. Bougher**, and family made their home to the west of him.

Marion Beckler originally wrote that William H. Pearson's arrival year on Palomar Mountain was 1902 but that is incorrect. William H. Pearson was registered to vote on Palomar Mountain on August 6, 1892, and he died on Palomar on December 8, 1898.

Marion Beckler wrote that William H. Pearson and his son-in-law John Reddy (husband of Laura Belle) had homesteaded [1]. There is a 160-acre homestead for William H. Pierson (sic) proved up on July 26, 1897, so dating back five years, William H. Pearson started occupying that land in 1892 [63].



William H. Pearson's 1892 homestead (in Township 10S, Range 1E, Section 6)
overlaid on 1997 USGS Boucher Hill map

There is no homestead record for John Reddy [4]. There was a huge fire on Palomar Mountain in September 1899, encompassing the land where the Reddys lived and they left Palomar Mountain thereafter [see below]. Perhaps John Reddy didn't prove up after the required five years residency, and gave up the land, or he did not homestead.

On August 6, 1892, August 11, 1894, and June 1, 1896, William H. Pearson was registered to vote on Palomar Mountain (Nellie Post Office).

The San Diego Union reported in September 1897 that "Rancher Pearson, who has an apiary at the foot of Palomar mountain, has produced 40 tons of honey this season from 250 stands of bees [21]."

Ida W. Pearson and William Ellsworth Bougher

In May 1889, William H. Pearson's daughter **Ida W. Pearson** married **William Ellsworth Bougher** in Orange, California; their marriage license said W.E. Bougher lived in McPherson and Ida Pearson lived in El Modena [12]. McPherson and El Modena are in the city of Orange.

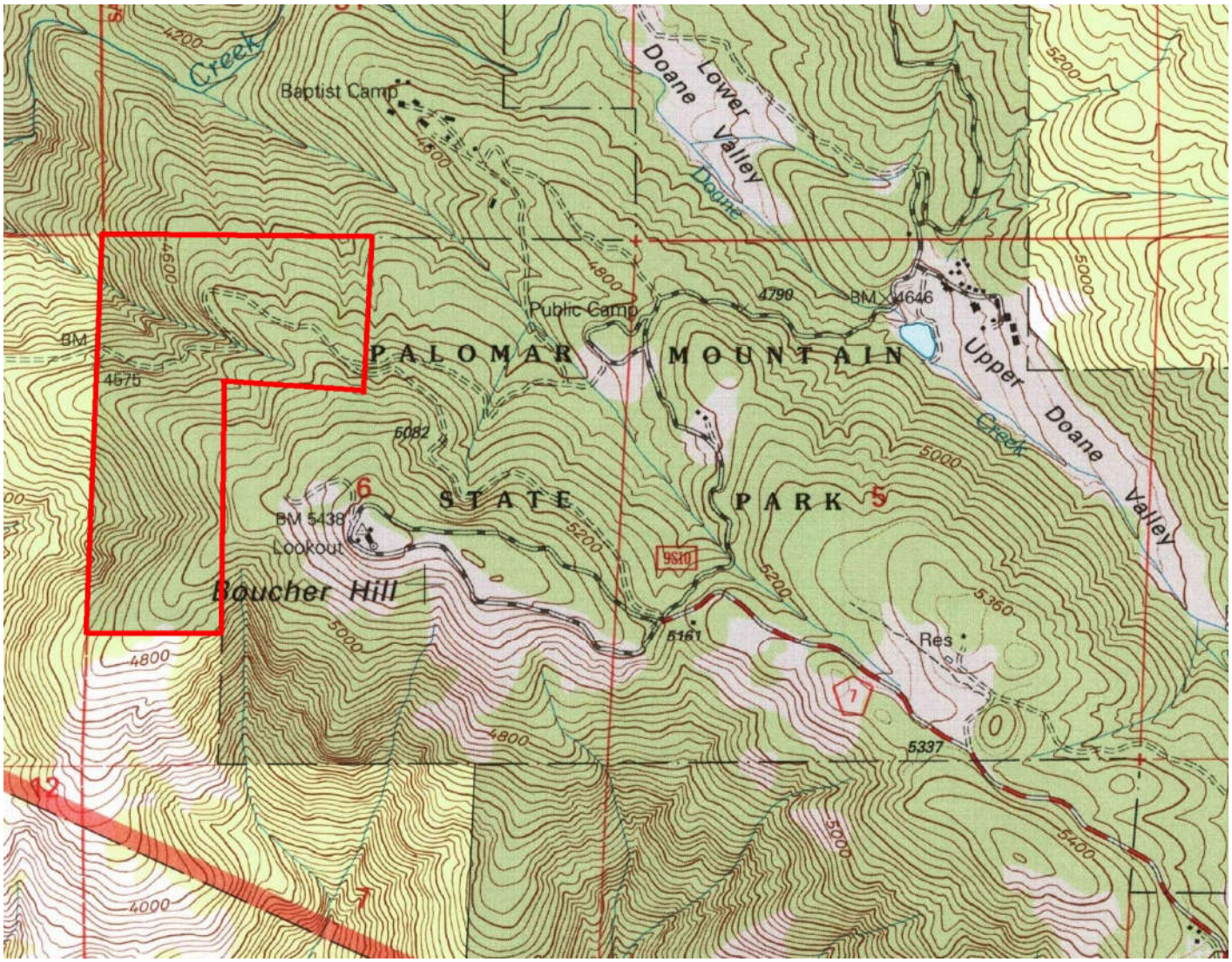
Previous to Bougher's 1889 wedding, a February 1888 list of state and county tax assessments included W.E. Bougher for a lot in the East Side addition to Modena [11].

On August 14, 1890, William E. Bougher registered to vote and was living in Burbank, California.

The children of William Ellsworth Bougher and Ida W. Pearson were Ernest Wilton (1890-1987; married Lois M. Clency, 1893-1949), Ina Estelle (1893-1964; married Harry Tirsway Mabrey, 1892-1928), a boy who died in childbirth in 1905, and Alvin Eugene (1909-1993, married Helen Margaret Pettit, 1914-1980).

William E. Bougher homesteaded 163 acres on Palomar Mountain (Township 10S, Range 1E, Section 6), proving up on July 27, 1897, so William E. Bougher had moved onto his Palomar land five years earlier in 1892 [4]. Bougher's 1892 arrival matches with William H. Pearson moving onto his Palomar Mountain homestead land in 1892, plus Pearson was registered to vote on Palomar Mountain on August 6, 1892.

Marion Beckler wrote "(Bougher's) son, Ernest, had been born in Burbank. His daughter Ina was born on the mountain [1]." Ernest Bougher was born in Burbank in 1890, and Ina Bougher was born on Palomar in 1893.



William E. Bougher's 1892 homestead (in Township 10S, Range 1E, Section 6)
overlaid on 1997 USGS Boucher Hill map

Bougher and Pearson may have owned more land in the area of Bougher's homestead, but San Diego County property records were not researched for this history.

Marion Beckler writes [1]:

> Bougher built his house of logs and of lumber from the sawmill in Pedley Valley. He made his own shakes, two feet long, for the roof. Water had to be hauled from a spring in barrels on a sled. He built a cistern to fill with snow and supplement the spring water. Having built his home, he bought another 160 acres and planted an apple orchard.

William E. Bougher House on Boucher Hill, cistern at right. House was torn down in 1964. Bonnie Phelps photo

Robert Asher writes in his *My Palomar* memoir [62]:

> The Bougher house lies on the edge of a flat spur some distance below the tower to the west. The house is somewhat unique in construction, the main living room having double plank walls with a ten-inch space between. There is a ceiling overhead with an attic above. The inside walls were covered with

cheesecloth and wallpaper. The house being located in a very exposed position, some such protection against the cold winds was imperative.

William E. Bougher House on Boucher Hill, cistern at left. House was torn down in 1964.
Bonnie Phelps photo

On February 8, 1894, the Escondido Times reported on Palomar news including that "Mr. Bougher has moved into his new hotel and will be prepared for tourists in the spring [13]."

In July 1894, the Escondido Times reported on Palomar news including that “Mr. Bougher, the bee man near the Oat ridge, reports the honey crop light on the mountain this year [16].” Oat ridge is the name of the ridge along which the Nate Harrison Grade climbs [17].

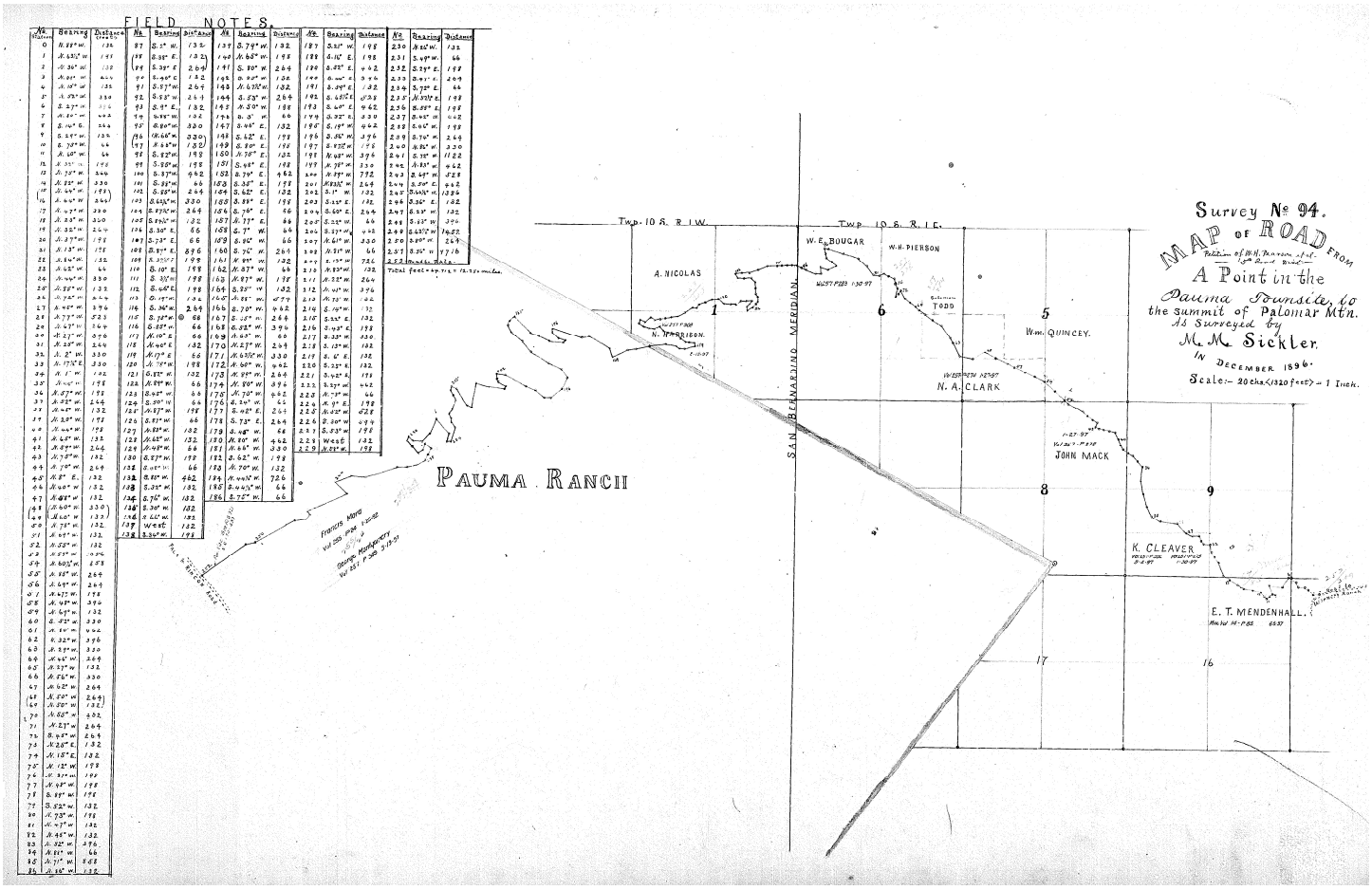
On September 6, 1894, William E. Bougher was registered to vote on Palomar Mountain (Nellie Post Office).

W.E. Bougher appears on the School Census Marshal’s Report for Palomar for the school year of 1896-1897 [2]. Bougher isn’t listed in the Palomar School Census for the school year of 1890-1891; the following years through 1895-1896 which would verify when Bougher and family moved onto Palomar Mountain are not available [2]. On that 1896-1897 school census report, Bougher is recorded living in Township 10, Range 1E, Section 6, with one boy between the age of five and seventeen years of age attending school, plus one child between the age of five and seventeen years of age not attending school, for a total of two children [2]. Bougher is listed as the same in the Palomar school census report for 1897-1898 [2].

Marion Beckler writes [1]:

> When the West Grade road was built, William Bougher helped build it.

The West Grade road is the Nate Harrison Grade, which was finished in 1900. On September 8, 1896, the San Diego Union reported on a San Diego County Board of Supervisors meeting which included this item: “A petition was received from W.E. Bougher and others asking for a road from a point of the highway from Rincon to Pala to a connection with Palomar grade near the summit of Palomar mountain. Filed [18].” The Palomar grade was the Trujillo Road or South Slide road that went up the south side of Palomar Mountain from Rancho Cuca and was constructed largely in 1891.

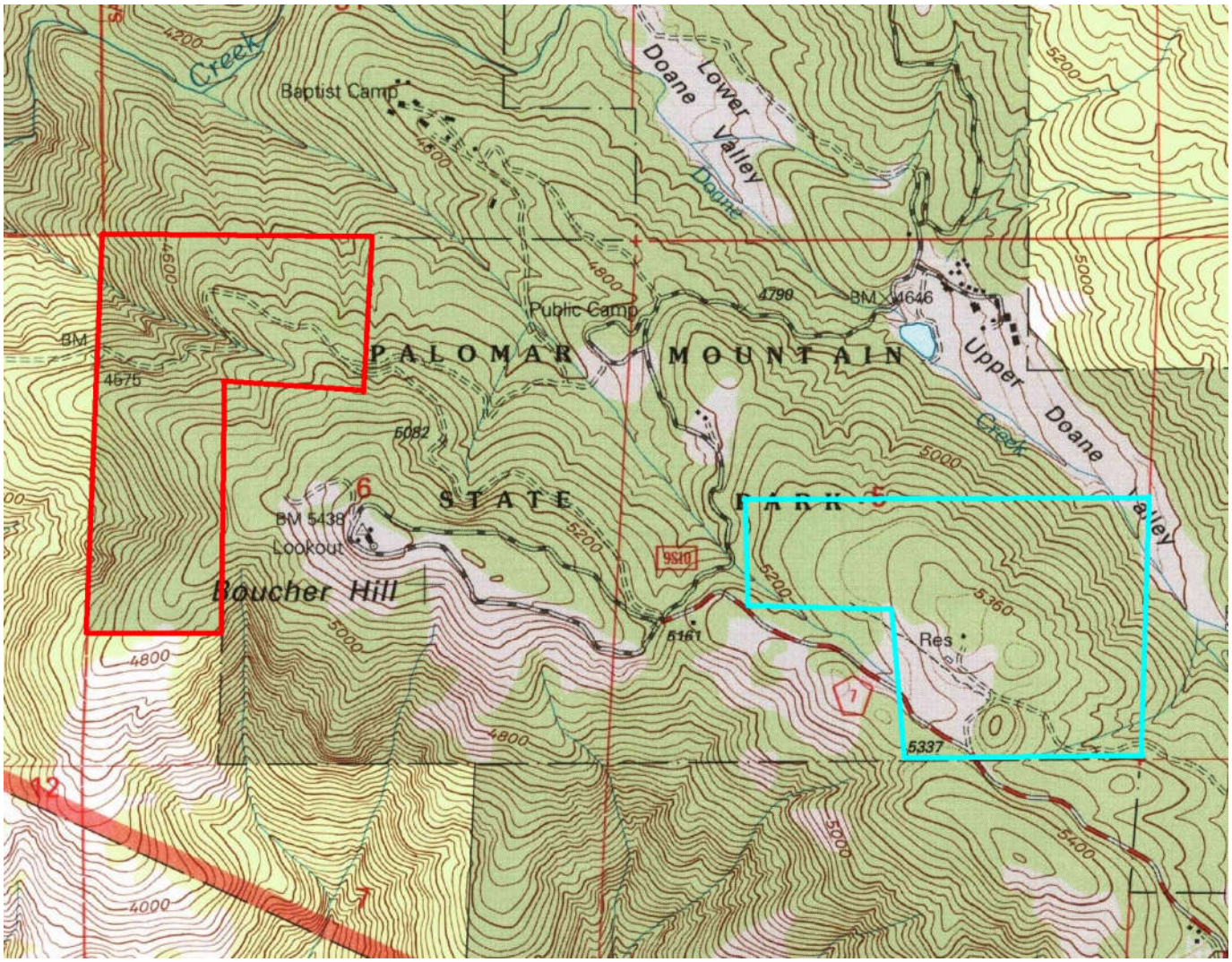


Survey map for Nate Harrison Grade, December 1896 [64]
Shows road passing through lands of Enos T. Mendenhall, Kimber Cleaver, John Mack, William Quincey, Newton Ambrose Clark, Solomon Todd, William Henry Pearson, William Ellsworth Bougher, A. Nicolas, Nate Harrison

In June 1897, it was reported that W.E. Bougher, W.H. Pearson and others had deeded right of way over their land to San Diego County for the Nate Harrison Grade [19].

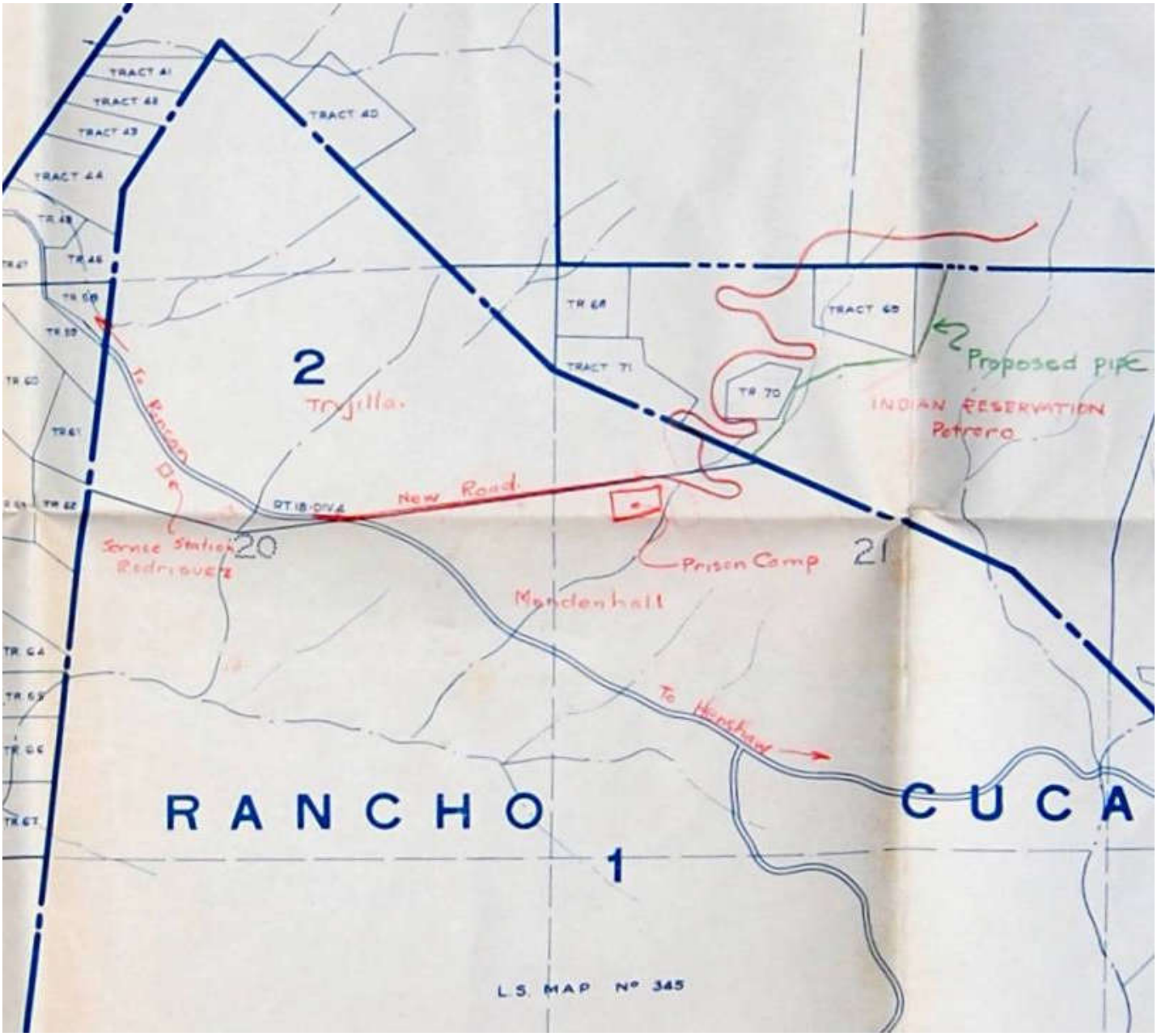
In December 1899, January 1900, June 1900, October 1900, and July 1902, it was reported that W.E. Bougher was paid $93.50, $138, $42.60, $19.50, and $49.50 from the Road Fund by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors [10].

In November 1897, the San Diegan-Sun reported that William E. Bougher purchased land from William O. Quincy for $600 [20].



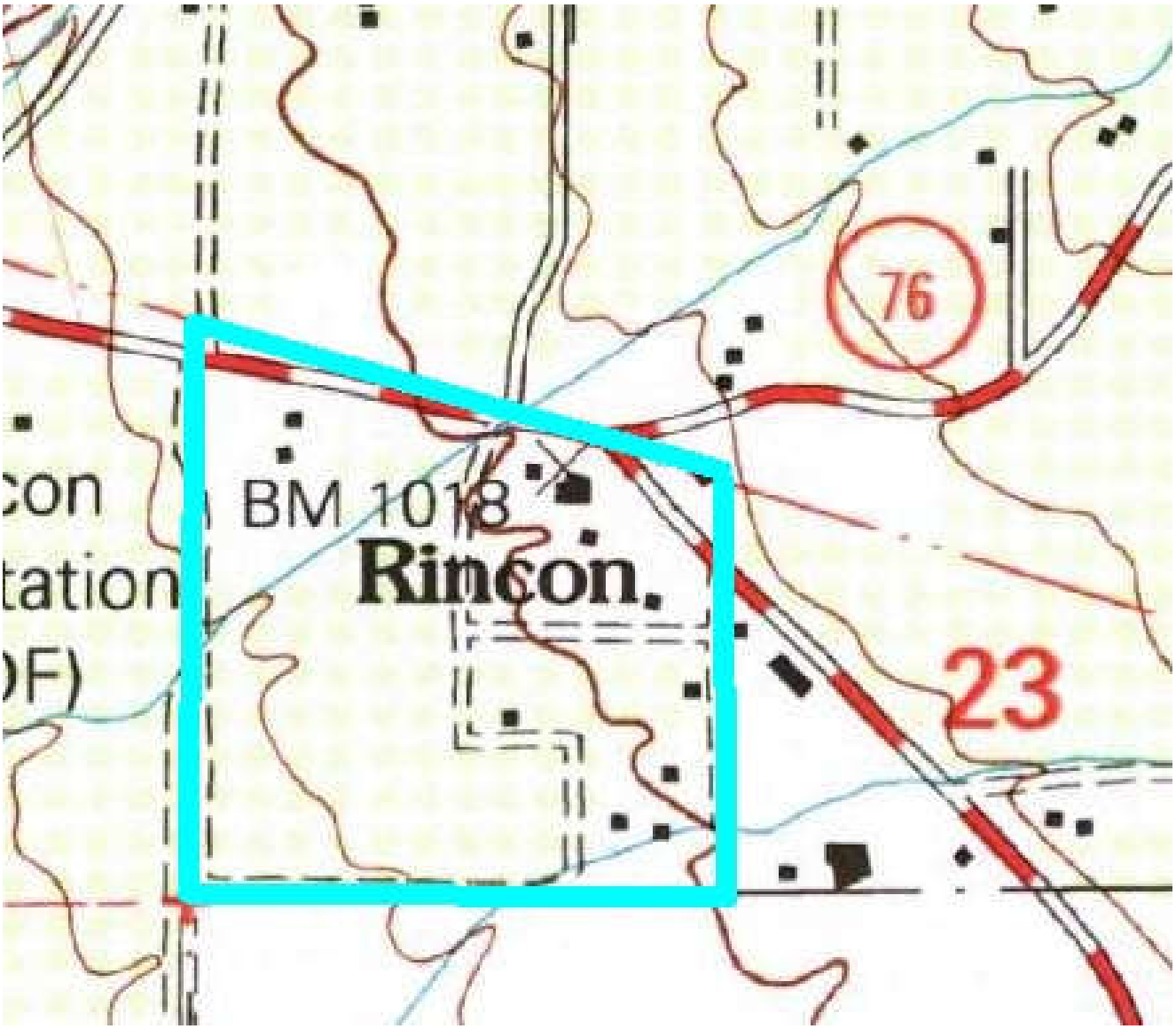
William E. Bougher's 1897 purchase from William O. Quincy in blue outline with Bougher's homestead land in red outline
overlaid on 1997 USGS Boucher Hill map

In February 1898, the San Diegan-Sun reported a real estate transaction of "part of lot 2" from Marie A. Trujillo and her husband Jose M. Trujillo to Wm E Bougher in Rancho Cuca or El Potrero [23]. This six acres was located downhill from Palomar Mountain north of Highway 76 and the S6 South Grade road (labelled 'new road" in red on this map) [23, 48,52].



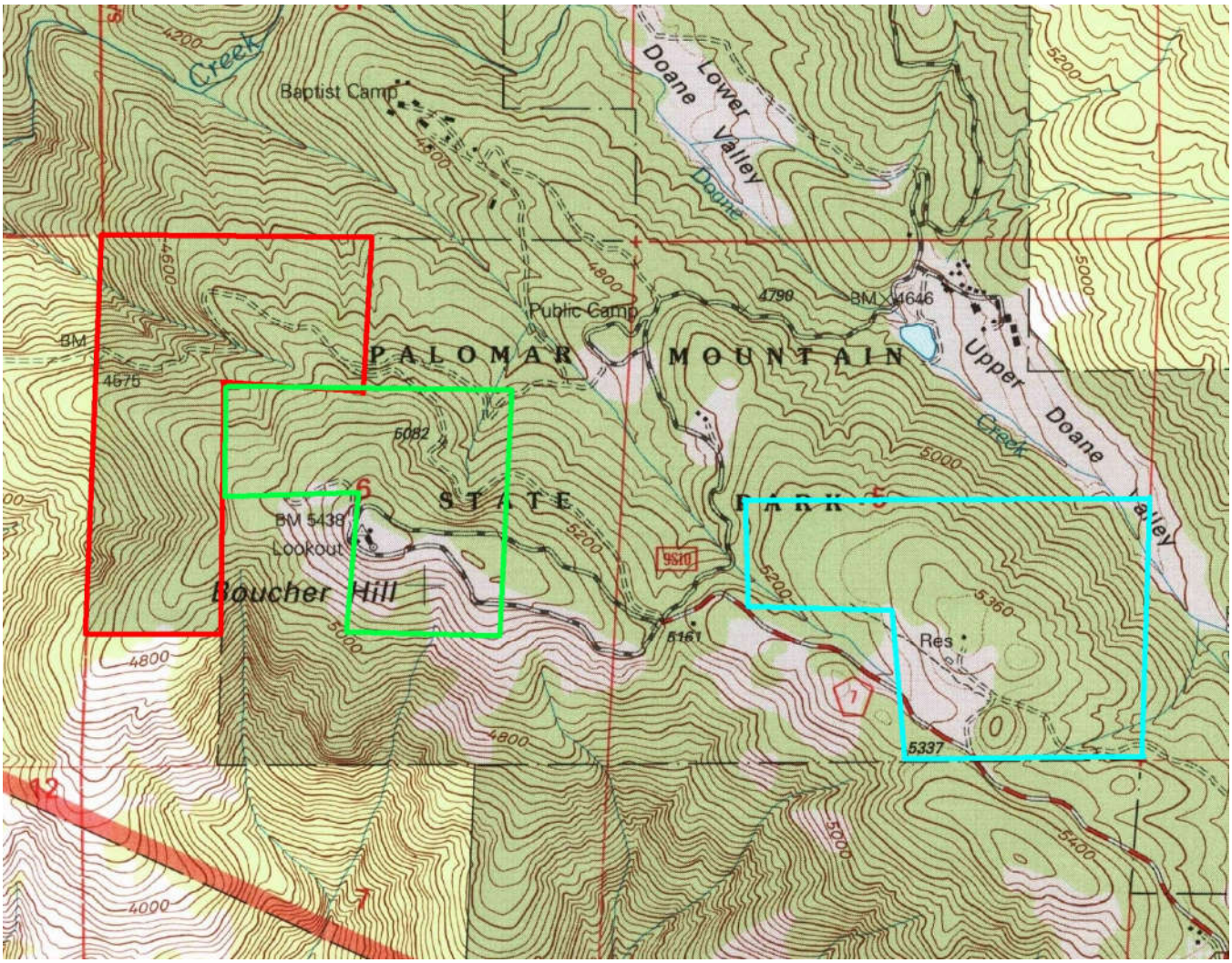
Lot 2 associated with Trujillo of which Bougher purchased part
"New Road" is S6 South Grade
Map of San Diego County T.10S., R.1E., S.B.M. and Rancho Cuca. San Francisco, Tax Factors Inc., 1929

On September 14, 1898, a $200 purchase of twenty acres in Rincon by W.E. Bougher from P.S. Sparkman was recorded; that twenty acres was located within Lot 1 of Section 23 [61]. P.S. Sparkman is Philip Steadman Sparkman who ran a store at Rincon and was murdered there in 1907.



Philip Steadman Sparkman's Lot 1 of Section 23 in Rincon (outlined in blue)
William E. Bougher purchased 20 acres within that lot in September 1898
Cropped from the 1997 USGS Boucher Hill map

In September 1898, the San Diego Union reported a property sale from WH Pearson to his son-in-law Wm E Bougher for $1 [24].



William E. Bougher's 1898 purchase from his father-in-law William H. Pearson in green outline, with Bougher's 1897 purchase from William O. Quincy in blue outline, and Bougher's homestead land in red outline
overlaid on 1997 USGS Boucher Hill map

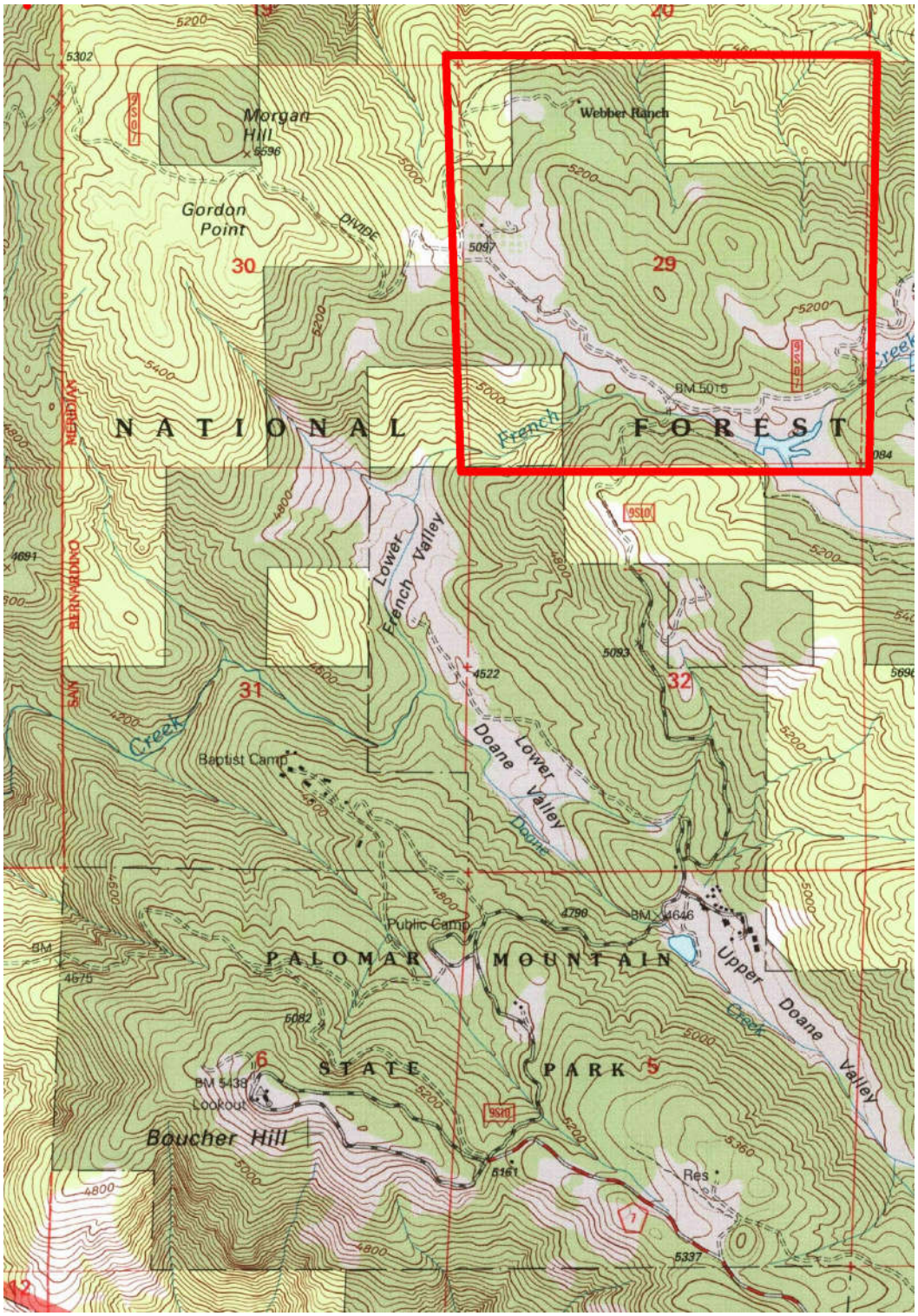
Laura Belle Pearson and John Richard Reddy

On January 17, 1885, William H. Pearson's daughter **Laura Belle Pearson** (1868-1957) married **John Richard Reddy** (born in Kansas on September 6, 1863; died in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada on March 6, 1921) in Kansas.

The children of John Richard Reddy and Laura Belle Pearson were Loda May (1887-1967), Walter Irven (1889-1974), Xenia (1894 – death after 1958), and a boy who died ten days after birth and is buried alongside William Pearson (1898) [1]. Their child Walter Irven Reddy was born in Anaheim, California on November 26, 1889.

J.R. Ready appears on the School Census Marshal's Report for Palomar for the school year of 1896-1897 [2]. Reddy/Ready isn't listed in the Palomar School Census for the school year of 1890-1891 and the intervening years which would verify when he and family moved onto Palomar Mountain are not available [2]. On that 1896-1897 school census report, Reddy is recorded living in Township 9, Range 1E, Section 29, with one boy and one girl between the age of five and seventeen years of age attending school, plus one child under the age of five, for a total of three children [2].

John H. Ready is listed at the Nellie Post Office (Palomar Mountain) in the Directory of San Diego City and County 1897 [60]. Reddy/Ready is listed as the same in the Palomar school census report for 1897-1898 [2].



Section 29, Township 9S, Range 1E, where the Reddys lived it is north of Boucher Hill where Bougher and Pearson
overlaid on 1997 USGS Boucher Hill map

The School Census Marshal's Report for Palomar for the school year of 1896-1897 records John R. Reddy living in Section 29, Township 9S, Range 1E [2]. Marion Beckler wrote that the Reddys were located "over the ridge at the north of Doane Valley" which places them in Section 29 [1]. Outlined in red above, Section 29 land was originally homesteaded by Ygnacio Dowell, Charles T. Fosdick, Hubert Foussat, Amos J. Johnson, Henry W. Keim, or Jean Marie Riviere [4].

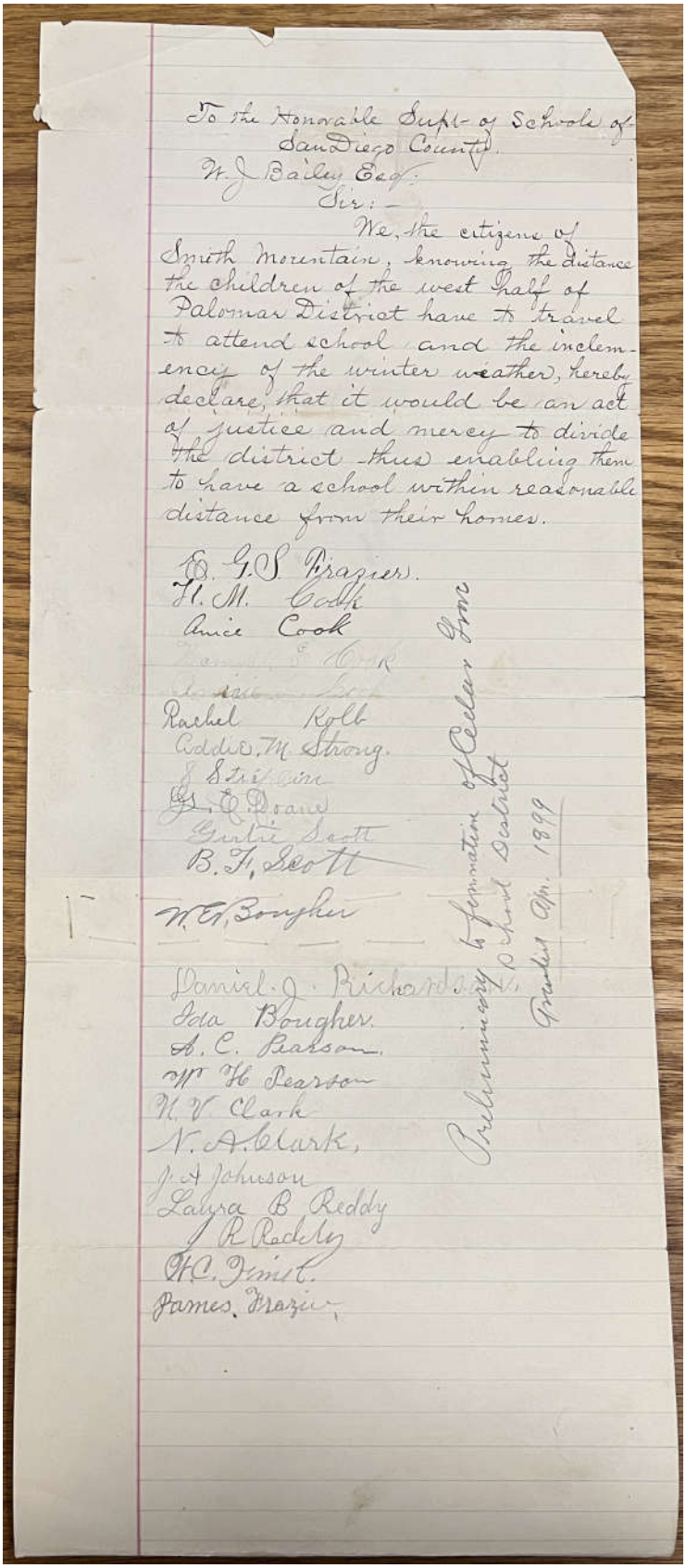
Palomar Mountain School in 1899

Children on the horse are Loda and Walter Reddy

Back Row: Edna Caroline Cutler, the teacher, and Mabel Hindorff.
Second row, left to right: Elizabeth Bailey, Mary Elizabeth Mendenhall, Herbert Smith, Elmer Johnson, Clarence Smith, George Mendenhall and Madge Smith.
Third row, left to right: Milton Bailey, Orlando Bailey and Lemuel Clark.
Front: Ed. (Hap) Mendenhall.

Escondido History Center photo/from Margie Mendenhall

An 1898 (not 1899) petition to form a new Cedar Grove school district was signed by W.E. [William Ellsworth] Bougher, Ida Bougher, A.C. [Albert Clarkson] Pearson, W.H. [William Henry] Pearson, Laura B. [Laura Bell] Reddy and J.R. [John Richard] Reddy among others [2].

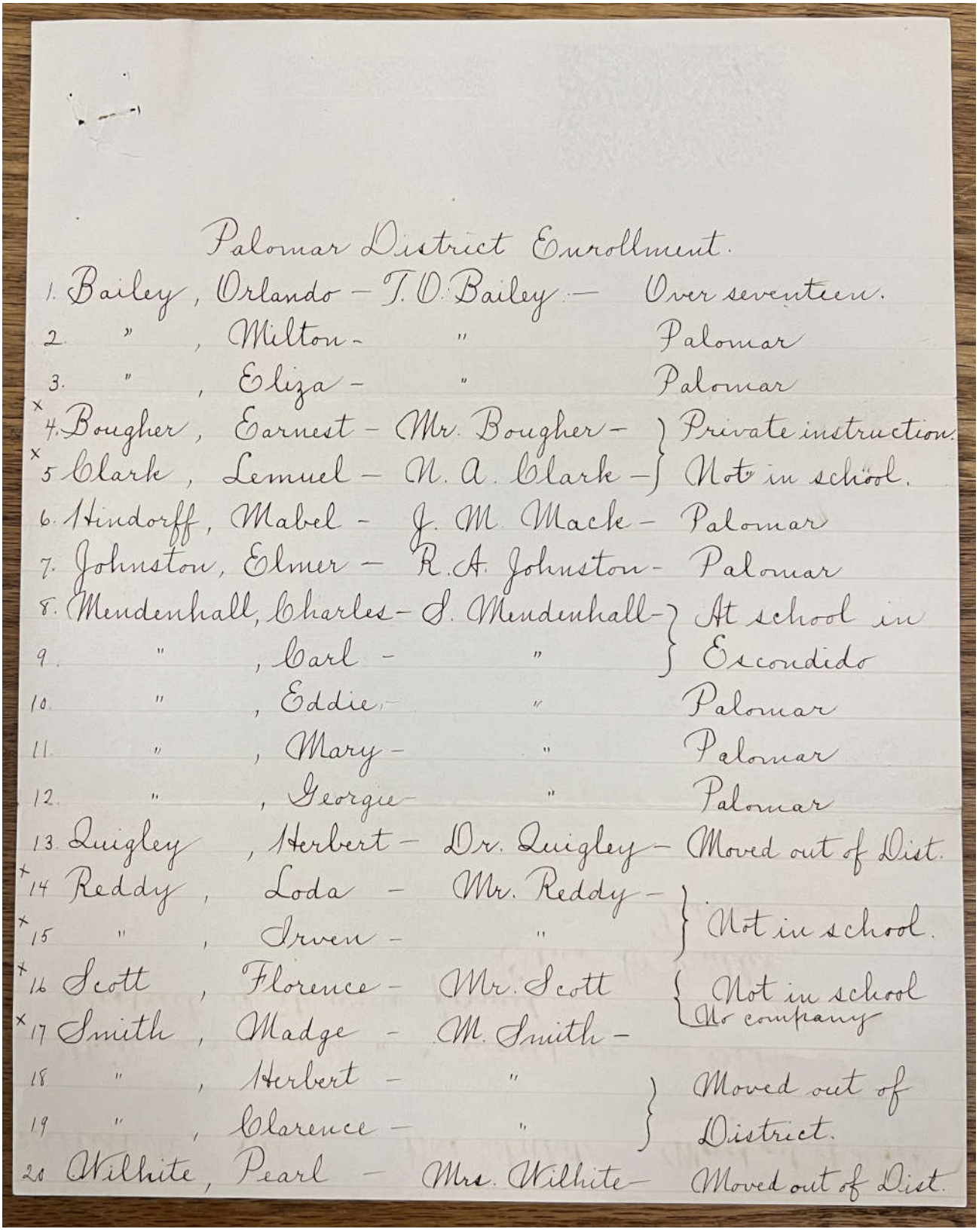


To the Honorable Supt. of Schools of
San Diego County.
W. J. Bailey Esq.
Sir: —
We, the citizens of Smith Mountain, knowing the distance the children of the west half of Palomar District have to travel to attend school and the inclemency of the winter weather, hereby declare, that it would be an act of justice and mercy to divide the district thus enabling them to have a school within reasonable distance from their homes.

E. G. S. Frazier.
H. M. Cook
Annie Cook
[illegible] Cook
[illegible]
Rachel Kolb
Addie M. Strong.
J. Strickland
G. E. Doane
Gertie Scott
B. F. Scott
W. E. Bougher
Daniel J. Richards
Ida Bougher.
A. C. Pearson.
W. H. Pearson
N. V. Clark
N. A. Clark,
J. A. Johnson
Laura B Reddy
J. R. Reddy
H. C. Frost.
James. Frazier

Preliminary to formation of Cedar Grove School District
Trustee Apr. 1898

The Palomar teacher at the time, Edna Caroline Cutler, wrote a Palomar District Enrollment list of white students, noting those who would be in the Cedar Grove School District if it were formed; it listed Ernest Bougher and Loda and Irven Reddy [2]. This list is undated but likely written by her in Fall 1898 [2].



Palomar District Enrollment.

1. Bailey, Orlando – T. O. Bailey. – Over seventeen.
2. " , Milton – " Palomar
3. " , Eliza – " Palomar
4. × Bougher, Earnest – Mr. Bougher – } Private instruction.
5. × Clark, Lemuel – N. A. Clark – } Not in school.
6. Hindorff, Mabel – J. M. Mack – Palomar
7. Johnston, Elmer – R. A. Johnston – Palomar
8. Mendenhall, Charles – S. Mendenhall – } At school in
9. " , Carl – " } Escondido
10. " , Eddie – " Palomar
11. " , Mary – " Palomar
12. " , Georgie – " Palomar
13. Quigley, Herbert – Dr. Quigley – Moved out of Dist.
14. × Reddy, Loda – Mr. Reddy – } Not in school.
15. × " , Irven – " }
16. × Scott, Florence – Mr. Scott } Not in school
17. × Smith, Madge – M. Smith – } No company
18. " , Herbert – " } Moved out of
19. " , Clarence – " } District.
20. Wilhite, Pearl – Mrs. Wilhite – Moved out of Dist.

21 Wilhite, Ruby - Mrs. Wilhite - Moved out of Dist.

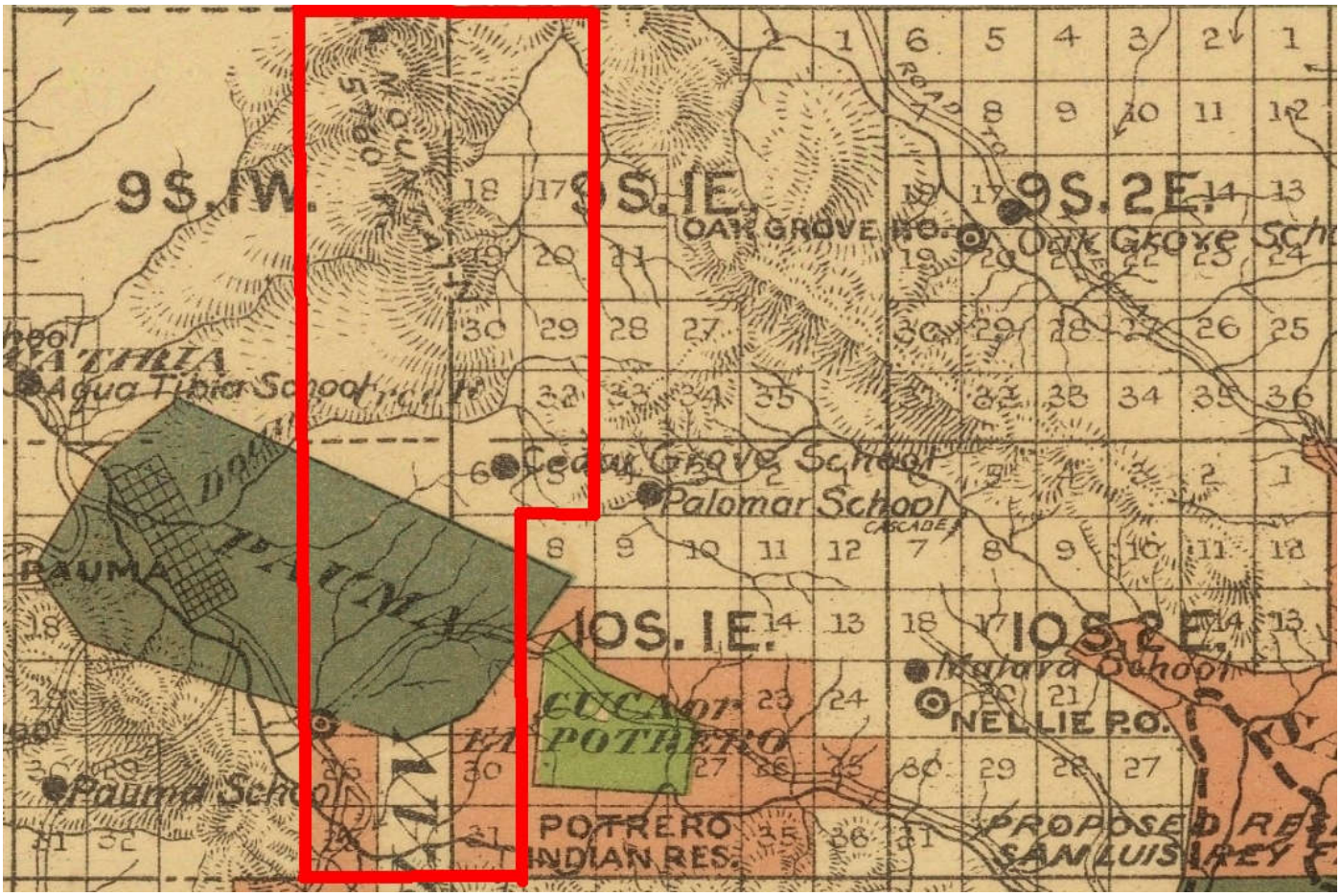
Those marked with a "x" would be in Cedar Grove District if it were formed.

Edna C. Cutler,
Teacher.

Marion Beckler wrote [1]:

> And now the people of the mountain's west end demanded a school. They got it. Cedar Grove District was established. School was opened in the Pearson home. There were **Ina and Ernest Bougher**, **Walter and Loda Reddy**, Clarence and Madge Smith whose mother had died and they were living with the Clarks, and Lemuel Clark. Mrs. Nellie V. Clark was the teacher. The Clark home was on the present site of the State Park Picnic Grounds. Later a schoolhouse was built on the Solomon Todd place, now Cedar Grove Camp. But, even with three schools, some of the mountain children had quite a distance to come to school. **Walter and Loda Reddy** rode horseback from over the ridge at the north of Doane Valley. They were terrified at wild cats and mountain lions, and they had to get off their horse to open and close gates!

The Cedar Grove school district adjacent to the Palomar School district was formed in December 1898, with William E. Bougher, William H. Pearson and Mrs. J.R. Reddy as school district trustees [3].



Cedar Grove School District boundary, 1898 [2]
Overlaid on c1900 Official Map of San Diego County

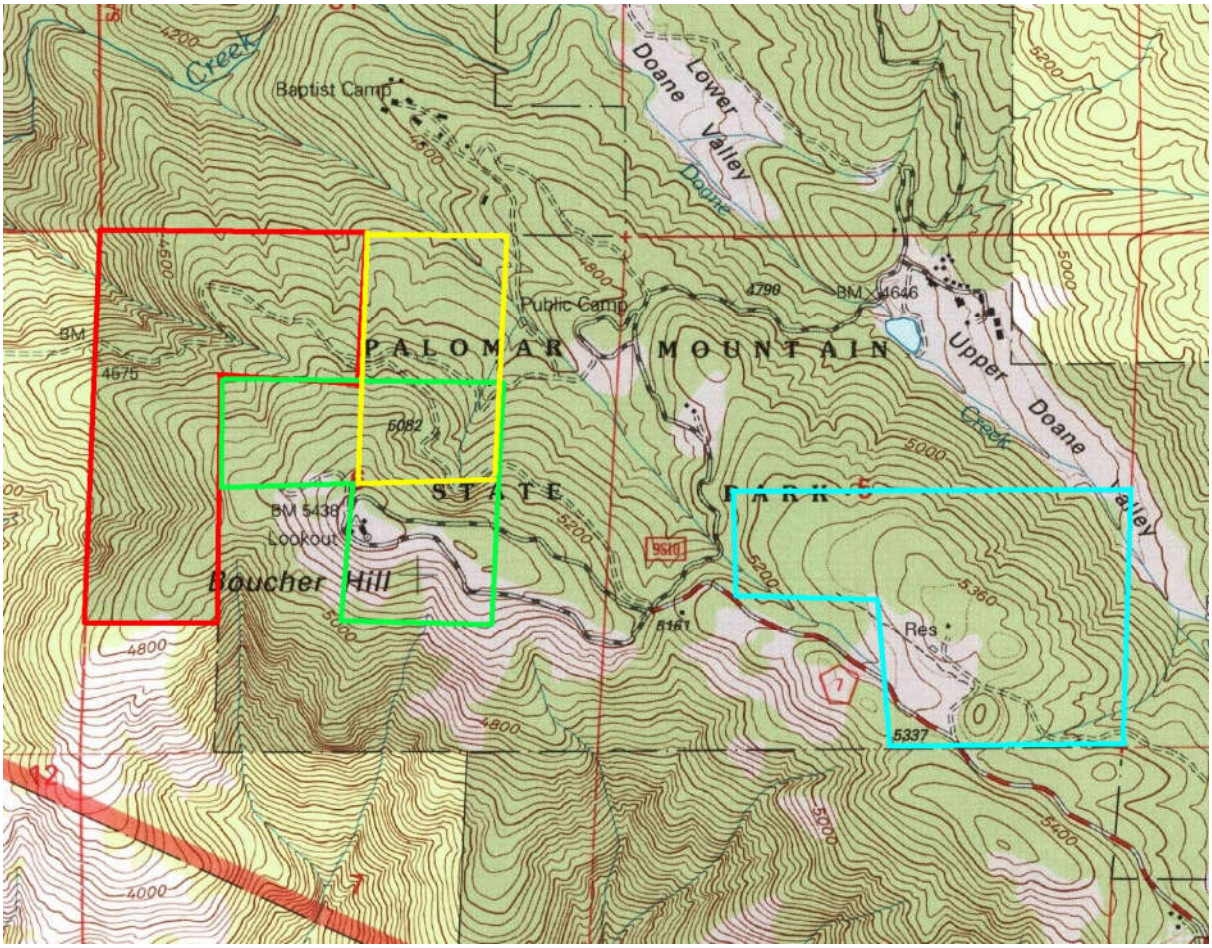
DEATH OF WILLIAM HENRY PEARSON

The San Diego Union reported on December 15, 1898 [22]:

> CRUSHED TO DEATH
>
> Sad End of a Rancher on Palomar Mountain
>
> W.H. Pearson, a well-known rancher on Palomar mountain, was instantly killed last Thursday while engaged in cutting off a huge limb of a tree which had just fallen. The limb was on a balance, and while Mr. Pearson was on his knees the limb suddenly fell upon him, striking him on the head and resting on his shoulders. The weight of the tree was so great that it could not be removed from Mr. Pearson until it was sawed through again. When he was finally rescued he was dead. He leaves a widow and several children. He was buried in a plot of ground which will be deeded to the community by a resident for use as a cemetery.

William Pearson died December 8, 1898, in what is now Palomar Mountain State Park and is buried there

Marion Beckler wrote that the ten-day old son of Laura Belle Pearson and John Richard Reddy was buried alongside William Pearson [1]. In October 1899, William E. Bougher and his wife Ida sold land for $1 to William H. Pearson's widow Abigail [25].



The Boughers' 1899 sale to Abigail Pearson in yellow outline overlaid on 1997 USGS Boucher Hill map

Abigail Caroline Pearson died in Turlock, California on April 29, 1920, and is buried there
Findagrave ID 55786635

W.E. Bougher appears on the School Census Marshal's Report for Cedar Grove for the school year of 1898-1899 [2]. On that 1898-1899 school census report, Bougher is recorded living in Township 10S, Range 1E, Section 6, with one boy and one girl between the age of five and seventeen years of age who were attending school, plus one child between the age of five and seventeen years of age not attending school, for a total of two children (not a total of three children; that census doesn't add up correctly for him) [2].

J.R. Reddy appears on the School Census Marshal's Report for Cedar Grove for the school year of 1898-1899 [2]. On that 1898-1899 school census report, Reddy is recorded living in Township 10S, Range 1E, Section 29, with one boy and two girls between the age of five and seventeen years of age with two attending school, and one not attending school, for a total of three children [2].

In June 1899, B.F. Scott, W.E. Bougher and Mrs. J.R. Reddy were reported as newly elected Cedar Grove school district trustees for the next term [15].

SEPTEMBER 1899 FIRE ON PALOMAR MOUNTAIN

On September 24, 1899, the Riverside Morning Enterprise reported [26]:

> Word reached this office yesterday to the effect that a big forest fire was raging on Smith mountain and in that vicinity. It was stated that the flames were running wild and that the foliage, trees and underbrush were being destroyed by the flames by the acre. The fire has filled that part of the country with a dense smoke, and some of it has no doubt drifted over this way to make the weather hotter than it otherwise would be. The party who brought the news stated that there were quite a number of men at work trying to control the flames, but they were not succeeding very well. The fire was set by campers, it is believed, and the people over there are said to be considerably worked up over the act of carelessness, which is causing so much damage to pasture, fences and other property.

A few days later on September 28, 1899, the San Diego Union reported [27]:

> TERRIBLE FIRES BURNING ON SMITH MOUNTAIN
>
> Graphic Story of the Heroic Efforts of the Fire Fighters by an Eye Witness
>
> Fighting the Flames for Days without Food of Sleep – Over Four Miles of the Choicest Timber Destroyed and the End is Not Yet
>
> In letters received by the Rev. H.B. Restarick, Mrs. Restarick gives a graphic description of the big forest fire which has been raging on Smith Mountain.

> Writing on September 22 she says: “The one exciting topic is the big fire raging on the north side of the mountain. The fire started in Oak Grove and has been creeping up the mountain since Monday. The roof of my tent is covered with ashes and the heat is great. Mr. Mendenhall and his two boys have been fighting fire in Frenchman’s Valley since daybreak yesterday without a bite to eat until 6 o’clock this morning. **Mr. Ready** and Mr. Clark went out this morning. It was a terrible sight last night, when the great flames would rush to the top of some large pine tree. The fire seems to be about four miles long.”

Mr. Ready is John Richard Reddy. Frenchman’s Valley is French Valley. Other names are Henry Bond Restarick, and Newton A. Clark.

> On September 24 she writes: “The excitement and suspense of the last three days has been something dreadful. Lemuel Clark (a boy 14 years old) left for the scene of action yesterday morning early, and when night came on he did not return, nor did Mr. Clark, nor could we get any news, only see what seemed to be the whole upper end of Doane’s Valley, and the high peaks above it, on fire. During the day the roar of the flames was something terrific. It seemed to Mrs. Clark and all of us that the fire had crossed Doane’s valley and was headed this way. Mrs. Johnson was nearly frantic, and would keep saying to me, ‘What shall we do? What can we do? Nothing on earth can save us if [it] starts in this heavy timber.’ There is no fire break any where between here and Doane’s, except the road, and the fire. Night came on, still there was no news. Poor Mrs. Clark was nearly paralyzed with fright. We all went to bed except Mrs. Clark, in spite of the fearful spectacle. But we didn’t sleep much. Mrs. Clark paced the road as far as the clearing, back and forth all night. Poor Arthur was so frightened he said, ‘Oh mamma, let us pray, that’s all we can do now.’ The smell of smoke we were conscious of, even when we dozed off. When morning came, Mrs. Clark could endure the suspense no longer, and she and Lillian started on horseback for the **Ready’s**, but they only got to **Bougher’s**, for there they found the scene of the fire. On the west and north side four men were at work making back fires to save the **Bougher’s** home.”

Bougher is William Ellsworth Bougher.

> “But I must go back to Friday night. **Mr. Ready** fought the fire all alone until Mr. Clark came to him; then they succeeded in saving the Quigley place by working all Friday night. Doane joined them early Saturday morning and they all worked like mad men all day yesterday and last night, to save **Ready’s** crops and house. **Mrs. Ready** climbed to the roof and her mother and the children handed up buckets of water to keep the sacks saturated while burning debris was flying all around them. They saved their

house and orchard, and most of their corn, but their fences are destroyed, which is a great loss. Those men fought like superhuman creatures without a bite to eat, and nearly famished with thirst and heat, and suffering from the terrible smoke. Shortly after noon Saturday Mr. Scott and **Mr. Bougher** arrived home from Escondido. They joined the other men and soon saw that it would be a desperate fight to save the Todd and **Pearson** places, as the fire leaped from point to point, and was then in the Rainbow waterfall canyon, so after working all night making firebreaks at **Ready's**, Quigley's and Todd's, they decided their only hope was to back fire beginning near **Bougher's** on the west side of the road. They thought if they could keep the fire to that side of the road, we should all be saved on this side.

Names are George Edwin Doane, James W. Quigley, Benjamin F. Scott, William H. Pearson, and Solomon Todd.

Mrs. Clark got there just as they began back-firing, and she and Lillian and **Mrs. Bougher** and Mrs. Scott wore themselves out carrying water back and forth to the famishing men. At one time it seemed certain that **Mrs. Pearson's** house would go, and her fine orchard and everything, but they saved it. When Mrs. Clark came back at noon she said: 'There is little chance for us; the men have but little hope that they can keep the fire on the west side of the road. In about an hour they will be able to tell, and if not, Mr. Clark will come home at once and begin back firing here." She said the women were working with the men, carrying water and fighting fire. Lemuel Clark is a perfect hero. The men left that boy stationed at various posts during the night, telling him to watch and control the fire at his point, and he did his duty unflinchingly every time. Tonight (Sunday) he is still at it and he has not had a wink of sleep for two nights, working like a man for two days and nights.

"When Mrs. Clark told me the state of affairs, I got on the white horse and took some aromatic spirits of ammonia, some other remedies and a flask of whisky, for I found no one had any. I took also some provisions. Lemuel had nothing to eat all day except a pilot biscuit burned to a cinder, which he found at **Ready's**. I also took some raisins for the men to carry in their pockets, which are good to allay thirst. I tell you my heart ached when I saw those poor women toiling up that steep hill with water buckets, with palpitating hearts, lungs catching for breath, and perspiration streaming down their faces. A burning tree had fallen across the road and the women and Mr. Scott chopped it to pieces and threw it down the west side. They were so glad I came and so glad to get all I had brought, for they needed the whisky and the provisions.

"I tried to get **Mrs. Pearson** to leave and come home with me, and then go to her daughter, **Mrs. Ready**, who had utterly collapsed, but she had to go to see if she could help save her own house. Mr. Clark got home at 7 this evening, the most tired [*illegible words*] but he brought the good news. 'We are safe, unless the fire should get away from the men tonight.' Poor Mr. Scott was so tired that he could not get to **Boucher's** except by crawling on all fours. The others are watching and fighting fire tonight, when they hope the worst will be over.

"D. Nichols and party of fourteen were camping at Doane's Valley. They decamped yesterday. The smoke was so suffocating they thought they would soon be burned out. Mr. Mendenhall says in thirty years there has never been such a fire on the mountains. They are so few men up there to fight it; there is the trouble. The fire had driven snakes and animals hither and thither. A big one was killed near our tent yesterday, and today Margaret was playing with a kitten and heard a hissing, and saw a young rattlesnake. She came running to Mrs. Clark, who soon killed it. The men saw four or five deer while fighting the fire. The poor birds have been driven out and many are around us, and of course mountain lions and other wild animals are driven out and may come our way."

Monday night, Sept. 25 – "Lemuel got home this morning, perfectly exhausted. He spent all his third night helping the men watch the fire. He reported the fire under control unless adverse winds should spring up. The men are still keeping watch. It is not spreading over the high range to the northwest. I wish you could see it. It is grand! It still looks very threatening. Mr. Clark says the finest timbered portion of the mountain is devastated. He went to the fire this afternoon and says that all is safe for us on this side.

The next day on September 29, 1899, the Riverside Morning Enterprise reported [28]:

SAN DIEGO FOREST FIRES

Twenty-five Square Miles of Choice Timber Destroyed

SAN DIEGO, Sept. 28. – The forest fires in the mountains of this county, which have been raging for the last two weeks are the fiercest ever known here. Reports today from Palomar give graphic descriptions of the great devastation of timber being wrought in that beautiful park region. Men and women have been fighting fire day and night, many going two and three days without food or sleep. Almost twenty-five square miles of the choicest timber land of Smith mountain are utterly destroyed. Many settlers had to make bitter and stubborn fights to save their homes. A large number of cattle are known to have burned. Deer, snakes and mountain lions have been

driven down to the settlements. The fire is now practically under control, although that burning on Cuyamaca mountains, thirty miles southwest, are still raging.

On October 5, 1899, the San Diego Union reported [29]:

FIRE ON PALOMAR

FLAMES' DESTRUCTIVE WORK.

MILES OF VALUABLE TIMBER WERE BURNED

Exciting Times for the Ranchers – **Mr. Bougher's** Deliberate Firing of His Timber Tract in Order to Save His House and Orchard

Mrs. H.B. Restarick and children returned yesterday from a four months' outing on Palomar mountain, much refreshed by the clean, pure mountain air and their stay among the pine trees. The most important incident of their sojourn was the forest fire of last week and the week before, which swept over the west end of the mountain for a distance of eight miles and along the north side for fifteen miles, destroying the best part of the timbered portion of the mountain. Mrs. Restarick says that the fires died down last week, and although a wreath of smoke may yet be seen here and there, there is no fire, and no danger now. Just how the fire started is not known. It was first noticed in the direction of Oak Grove, and swept up the north side of Palomar mountain, burning furiously among the pine trees. It was a week before it reached the summit, and there its southerly course was stayed, probably by the canyons, but it continued east and burned for a number of days longer. On the west end of the mountain it came clear over and swept down the south side, almost reaching Pala. By backfiring along the road leading over the mountain the fire was prevented from spreading along the south side and through the inhabited part of that section.

Those were exciting times for the residents of the mountain. The men worked night and day to fight the fire fiend and the women helped by carrying water. The men confined their efforts principally to backfiring in order to turn the course of the flames. A **Mr. Bougher** set fire to his own timber in order to save his house and orchard. He said that the striking of the match and the setting on fire of his own property was the hardest thing he ever did in his life. It was an unusually fine tract of timber and was of considerable value. It was realized that if the timber were not burned the fire would destroy the house, and it was therefore arranged that Mr. Doane should set fire to the tract. Mr. Doane declined to strike the match at the last

moment, and **Mr. Bougher** was therefore compelled to set fire to his own property. The timber burned but the house and orchard were saved.

The home of the Misses Frazer on the northeastern part of the mountain was saved by the heroic efforts of the Cook brothers. The Misses Frazer live alone on that part of the mountain, and by hard work have brought a fine ranch cut of the wilderness. Each took up a government claim, and with pick and shovel built a road three miles long down the mountain into the valley where their property is located. They make a living by raising cattle, chickens, and bees, and one of them carries the mail between Nellie and Jessee postoffices. The fire swept directly toward their place, and had it not been for the work of the Cook brothers in backfiring, the premises would undoubtedly have been devastated. A great many people have timber claims on the mountain, and the trees on a number of these claims were destroyed. The beautiful Waterfall canyon was burned out and Doane valley was only saved by backfiring. The flames swept along the northern end and west of the valley. The only buildings destroyed were two small uninhabited houses. Last week the ashes from the fire fell in Escondido, twenty-five miles away, and even the heat was felt at that place. A Mr. Scott, who assisted in fighting the fire, has been dangerously ill ever since, and doubts for his recovery are entertained.

Mrs. Restarick says that the burning trees, especially at night, presented a grand and beautiful sight. The red glare of the fire could be seen for miles, and the flames as they shot up the trees were also visible from nearly every part of the mountain. …

Names are Maria and Elizabeth Frazier, and Hiram and George Cook.

AFTER THE PALOMAR MOUNTAIN FIRE OF 1899

W.E. Bougher is listed in the Cedar Grove school census report for 1899-1900 living in Township 10S, Range 1E, Section 6, with two boys and one girl between the age of five and seventeen years of age attending school, for a total of three children [2].

However J.R. Reddy is not listed in the Cedar Grove school census report for 1899-1900 and 1900-1901; the Reddys probably moved from Palomar Mountain after that fire of September/October 1899.

W.E. Bougher is listed in the Cedar Grove school census report for 1900-1901 in Township 10S, Range 1E, Section 6, with one boy and one girl between the age of five and seventeen years of age attending school, for a total of two children [2].

There are no Cedar Grove school census reports available for following years [2]. However a payment request dated December 23, 1901, to the San Diego County Superintendent of Public Schools for the Cedar Grove teacher was signed by school trustees W.E. Bougher and B.F. Scott [2].

For the 1900 U.S. Census, William E. Bougher was recorded on June 1 and 2 on Smith Mountain with his family. Tax assessments published in June 1900 situated W.E. Bougher on 80 acres in the Cedar Grove school and road district No. 4, southwest quarter of northeast quarter and lot 2, section 6, township 10, range 1 east [8].

On June 14, 1900, the Anaheim Weekly Gazette reported on an "old gentleman who said he hailed from Smith Mountain" selling comb honey in Anaheim; though this may be Bougher selling his honey, he would have been only 37 years old at the time, and perhaps it can be inferred from the report that an Indian or Mexican American was the old gentleman [65]:

> Smith Mountain Honey
>
> An old gentleman, who said he hailed from Smith Mountain, San Diego county, drove into town on Friday with a load of comb honey, which met with ready sale. People stood about the two-horse rig in the street and purchased it at a lively rate, getting two frames for a quarter. Everybody said the honey was the finest they had seen in town this season. The old man said that he tried to sell his honey in Escondido, but the storekeepers there wanted him to take it out in trade, and then they did not offer him a white man's price for it. He told them he would drive all the way to Orange county and sell the honey for cash, and this at last accounts the old man seemed to be doing.

In June 1901, the San Diego Union reported on a honey contract lawsuit brought by Ed Fletcher against Bougher, with Fletcher claiming "that Mr. Bougher agreed to furnish him 12,000 pounds of honey but instead of keeping his agreement, took his money to another merchant before the six tons were delivered. It was brought out in the trial that no contract was executed and that the money was to be delivered subject to inspection. Judge Conklin held that the honey could be withdrawn any time before inspection, and therefore gave judgment for the defendant [30]."

In January 1902, W.E. Bougher of Nellie (Palomar Mountain) was among the list of those selected for trial jurors [6].

William Bougher was a ballot clerk for the Smith Mountain (Palomar) Precinct and the Palomar Precinct in October 1900 and 1902, respectively [5].

Robert Asher writes in his *My Palomar* memoir [62]:

> Mr. Bougher must have been an enterprising gentleman, there being two Bougher orchards with live trees still thriving and one orchard destroyed by gophers. An orchard had been planted on the ferny flat below and to the north and northeast of the old Lone Fir, but being soft ground, the gophers had destroyed the trees before 1903 when I built the Lone Fir trail through the flat down to the Dugout Camp and Rainbow Falls. Mr. Bougher did have many hives of bees, but they did not do very well, so he took them down to a location just south of the present Rincon Store at the foot of the mountain. He also moved the Cedar Grove Schoolhouse from the Oliver Place to the same location where he utilized the building as a honey house. Later this building was renovated and used for school purposes once again. Still later, after Phillip Sparkman's murder, Mr. T. O. Bailey lived there while selling off the Sparkman Store goods for the estate. The Boughers sold out their Palomar holdings to the Huntington people and for awhile made their home on Pepper Drive in El Cajon Valley.

On February 1904, William E. and Ida Bougher purchased lot 67, block E, in Middletown San Diego [7].

On August 16, 1905, the Escondido Times reported [31]:

> G.F. Kendall left for his home at San Diego Wednesday. He has been assisting W.E. Bougher at his bee ranch on Palomar during present season. Mr. Bougher has four hundred stands of bees and lately sold a carload of money to John Niven, of San Diego.

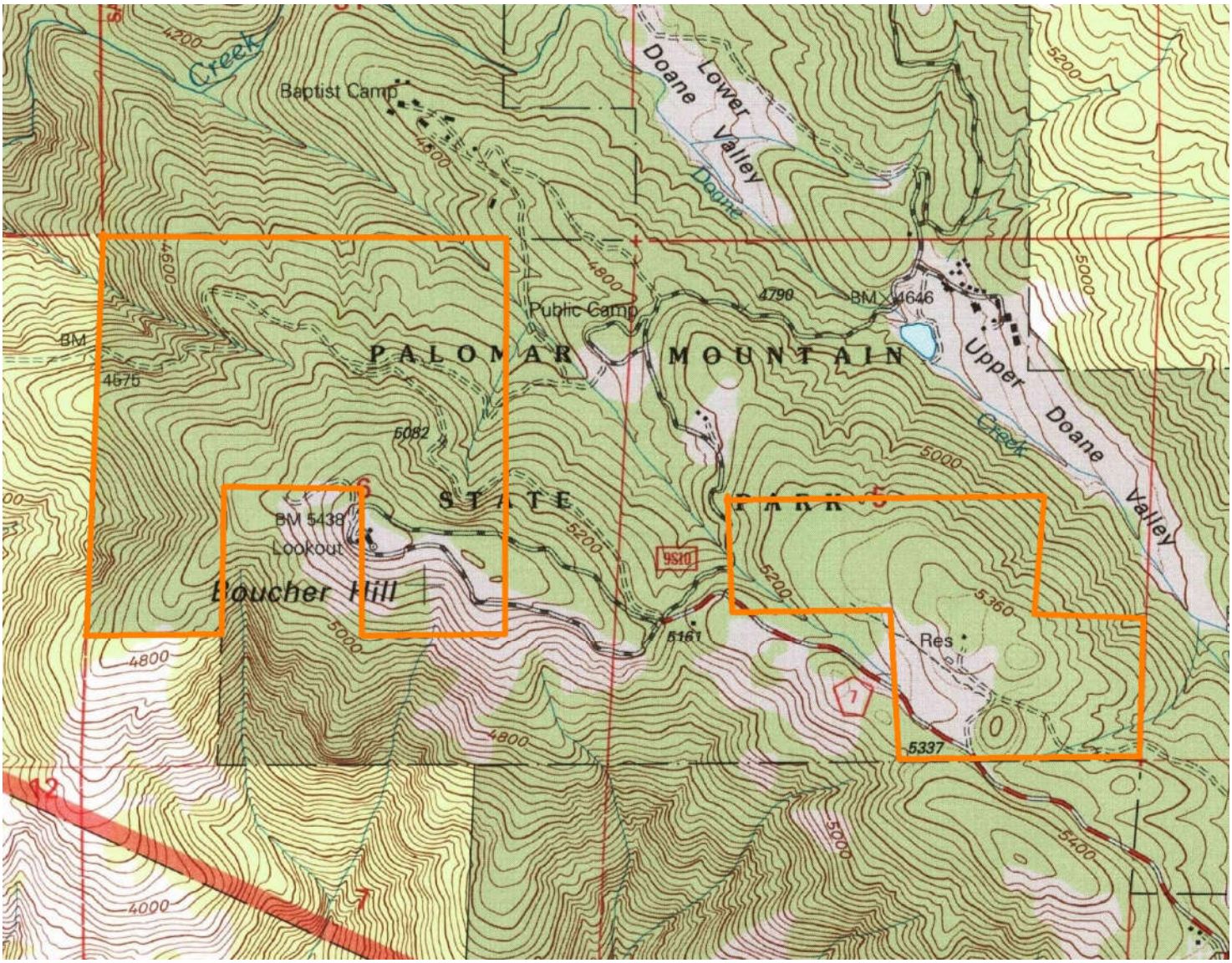
Smith Mountain was an alternate name for Palomar Mountain for several years. On September 1, 1905, The Advocate (Escondido) newspaper published [32]:

> W.E. Bougher, who lives at the foot of Smith Mountain is one of the most successful bee men in the county. From about 400 stands of bees he has extracted between 35 and 40 tons of honey this season. Mr. Bougher sold 330 cases of money at one sale that weighed over 20 tons for which he received four cents a pound.

Four cents a pound for twenty tons is $1,600, which would be worth $58,000 in 2025 [33]

In September 1905, the San Diegan-Sun reported that William E. and Ida Bougher had sold Palomar land to Henry S. McKee for $10 [34].

Fog from Bougher's Point, undated. Robert Asher photo



Boughers' 1905 sale to Henry S. McKee in orange outline
overlaid on 1997 USGS Boucher Hill map

Marion Beckler writes [1]:

> In 1905, his wife's health failing, Bougher moved to Rincon, and sold his ranch soon after.

The Boughers had a bee ranch in Rincon and may have lived there for a while but they next made their home in San Diego. Bougher also owned six acres of land in Rancho Cuca or El Potrero downhill from Palomar Mountain near the bottom of S6 South Grade [23, 48,52].

The Advocate newspaper of Escondido reported on December 29, 1905 [38]:

> W.E. Bougher, after looking after his bee ranch at Rincon passed through town yesterday on his way to his home in San Diego. Mr. Bougher reports that off of 350 stands of bees last year he cleared $2400.

$2,400 in 1905 is worth $87,000 in 2025 [33]

In October 1905, the San Diegan-Sun reported that William E. and Ida Bougher had purchased property in the Fleischer addition for $10; this was located on the west end of University Heights in San Diego, where the 163 freeway now runs [35].

In October 1905, William E. and Ida Bougher purchased land in Reed and Hubbell's addition; this is in the Barrio Logan area; they cold land there in 1906 [9,36].

The Advocate newspaper of Escondido reported on June 29, 1906 [39]:

> Mr. and Mrs. Bougher drove out from San Diego to their bee ranch at Rincon Saturday.
>
> Ed Mallicoat, who has been working for Mr. Bougher at Rincon, returned to San Diego last week. Mr. Bougher says that the dry hot weather of the last few days has ruined the bee feed.

The Advocate newspaper of Escondido reported on July 27, 1906 [40]:

> W.E. Bougher of Rincon is this week having a consignment of honey cases hauled to his bee ranch. He expected to need 700 cases but finds the honey yield much lighter than was expected.

On June 21, 1907, the Escondido Times reported [41]:

> Messrs. Cook and Holcomb are hauling honey to Escondido for Mr. Bougher.

Bougher got a building permit for house alterations and repairs on the north end of Eighth Street in the Fleisher addition in February 1908 [37]. They sold property in the Fleischer Addition in February 1908 and August 1909 [9]

William E. Bougher moved to Santee in El Cajon Valley at some point. At the time of the 1910 U.S. Census, in April 1910, William E. Bougher and his wife Ida were farming in the El Cajon township (Enumeration District 125 which is Lakeside) with their children Ernest W., Ina E., and Alvin E.

Will E. Bougher was an election clerk in the Santee precinct for an August 1910 election [14,43]. On August 30, 1910, the National City News reported [42]:

> Strawberries are being shipped from Santee station by Eyehaner & Mayer, L.H. Colby, **W.E. Bougher**, H. Culbertson, O.D. Hurley, A.E. Weesner, J.W. Harris. First-class berries have not come in yet. Prices are down lower than they ought to be, as the market as yet are flooded with cheap northern berries of indifferent quality. – El Cajon News.

In June 1911, the San Diego Weekly Union newspaper published a list of delinquent property taxes for the preceding tax year; W.E. Bougher was listed for his 20-acre bee ranch in Rincon [44,61].

Records show William E. Bougher living in Santee in 1912.

In March 1912, W.E. Bougher purchased a lot in Ocean Beach Park, which is now Ocean Beach in San Diego [45]. In June 1913, the San Diego Evening Tribune published a list of assessments for street work in Ocean Beach including W.E. Bougher [46]. Bougher sold this lot in 1921 [53].

In December 1913, the San Diego Union published a list of real estate transactions including W.E. Bougher purchasing property in Middletown, San Diego and selling property in El Cajon [47].

Records show William E. Bougher living in the city of San Diego in 1914.

William E. Bougher moved to the Richland area of San Marcos in 1917, farming forty acres [59]. Richland is northeast of the center of San Marcos. In November 1918, W.E. Bougher was listed as a San Marcos contributor to a war work fund [49]. In March 1919, the Escondido Times-Advocate had a classified ad listing Muscovian or quackless duck eggs for hatching for sale for $1 per dozen, by W.E. Bougher of San Marcos, and social columns in two 1919 newspapers had items about Mr. and Mrs. W.E. Bougher of Richland [50,51].

The 1920 U.S. Census records William E. Bougher as a farmer living in the Oakdale Precinct in the Escondido township with his son Alvin E. and his daughter Ina and her husband. His newspaper obituary said he raised turkeys and walnuts [57].

In 1921, the Mendenhall Cattle Company brought a lawsuit against various property owners including W.E. Bougher's six acres in Rancho Cuca or El Potrero in order to clarify Mendenhall Cattle Company property [48,52].

In 1927, the Bougher family of Richland moved to their Visalia ranch which they aimed to improve and sell, and then return to their Richland farm, which was leased in their absence by C.J. Walgenbach [54]. The Bougher family moved back to the Richland ranch in 1930 [55].

The 1930 U.S. Census records William E. Bougher as a fruit farmer in Visalia, California living with his wife Ida, his son Alvin E., and his widowed daughter Ina.

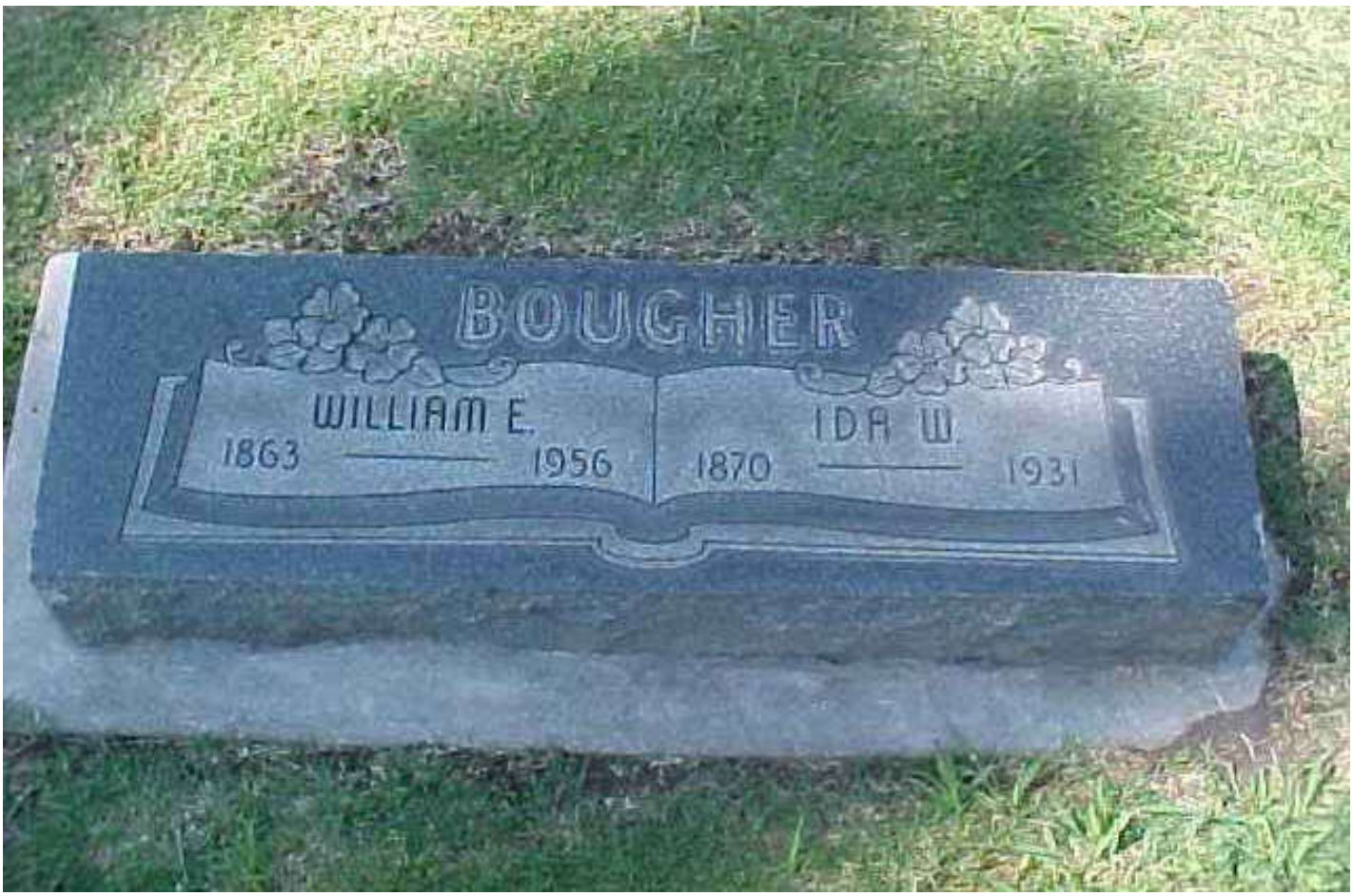
Ida Pearson Bougher died in San Diego on April 10, 1931 [56]. Her newspaper obituary said "she came to California in 1893, moving to San Diego county mountain district" [56]. This is incorrect; she came to California before 1893 with her father William Pearson and family and married William E. Bougher in Orange, California before 1893.

In the 1940 U.S. Census, William E. Bougher was a walnut and chicken farmer living with his widowed daughter Ina in Escondido. In the 1950 U.S. Census he was living with his daughter Ina in Escondido with no occupation listed.

Marion Beckler writes [1]:

> William Bougher died in Escondido, in the home of his daughter, Mrs. Ina Mabrey, at the age of ninety-two.

William Ellsworth Bougher died on January 17, 1956, and is buried alongside his wife Ida W. Pearson at the Mount Hope Cemetery in San Diego [57]. His newspaper obituary said "he came to California in 1891 [57]." This is incorrect; he came earlier, having owed taxes in El Modena, California in 1888, and was married in Orange, California in 1889 [11,12].



William Ellsworth and Ida W Boucher gravestone, Mount Hope Cemetery, San Diego Findagrave ID 30156852

John Richard Reddy and Laura Belle Pearson after Palomar Mountain

Marion Beckler writes [1]:

> The John Reddys, with their children, Walter I. and Loda, moved from the mountain (by 1900) by wagon, first to Ukiah, then Turlock and to Canada, where John Reddy died.

Marion Beckler originally wrote that the Reddys moved from Palomar Mountain in 1906 and omitted their daughter Xenia who was born in 1894 and tallied in the Palomar Mountain school census reports for 1896-1897 and 1897-1898 [2].

About the death of Laura Reddy's father William Pearson, Marion Beckler wrote [1]:

> William Pearson … met his tragic death, killed by a falling tree (on his property). Beside him lay a ten day old grandchild, son of his daughter Laura.

A ten-day old grandson would have been born in December 1898. Three Reddy children (Loda May, Walter Irven, and Xenia) were born before 1898. There are no ancestry.com records of a son born to the Reddys in 1898, nor does he appear with the Reddys in the 1900 and 1910 U.S. Census.

In the 1900 U.S. Census, John R. Reddy, his wife Laura and their children Loda and (Walter) Irven were recorded in Ukiah, California on June 13, 1900; their daughter Xenia is not listed. In the 1910 U.S. Census, daughter Xenia is living with her parents on a farm in Fairview, Merced County, California. Xenia is not listed with her parents in the 1920 U.S. Census.

John Richard Reddy died in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada on March 6, 1921. Then on June 16, 1923, his wife Laura Belle Pearson married John Nerz (1862-1934; Findagrave ID 130350389).

The 1936 obituary for Laura Belle Pearson Nerz stated she died in Modesto on December 27, 1936, and left two daughters, Mrs. Loda M. Retzlaff of Turlock and Mrs. R.L. Avery of Regina, Canada, and a son W.I. Reddy of Turlock [58]. Loda May Reddy married Frank Robert Retzlaff in 1909. Walter Irven Reddy married Paulina Wilhelmena Retzlaff in 1910.

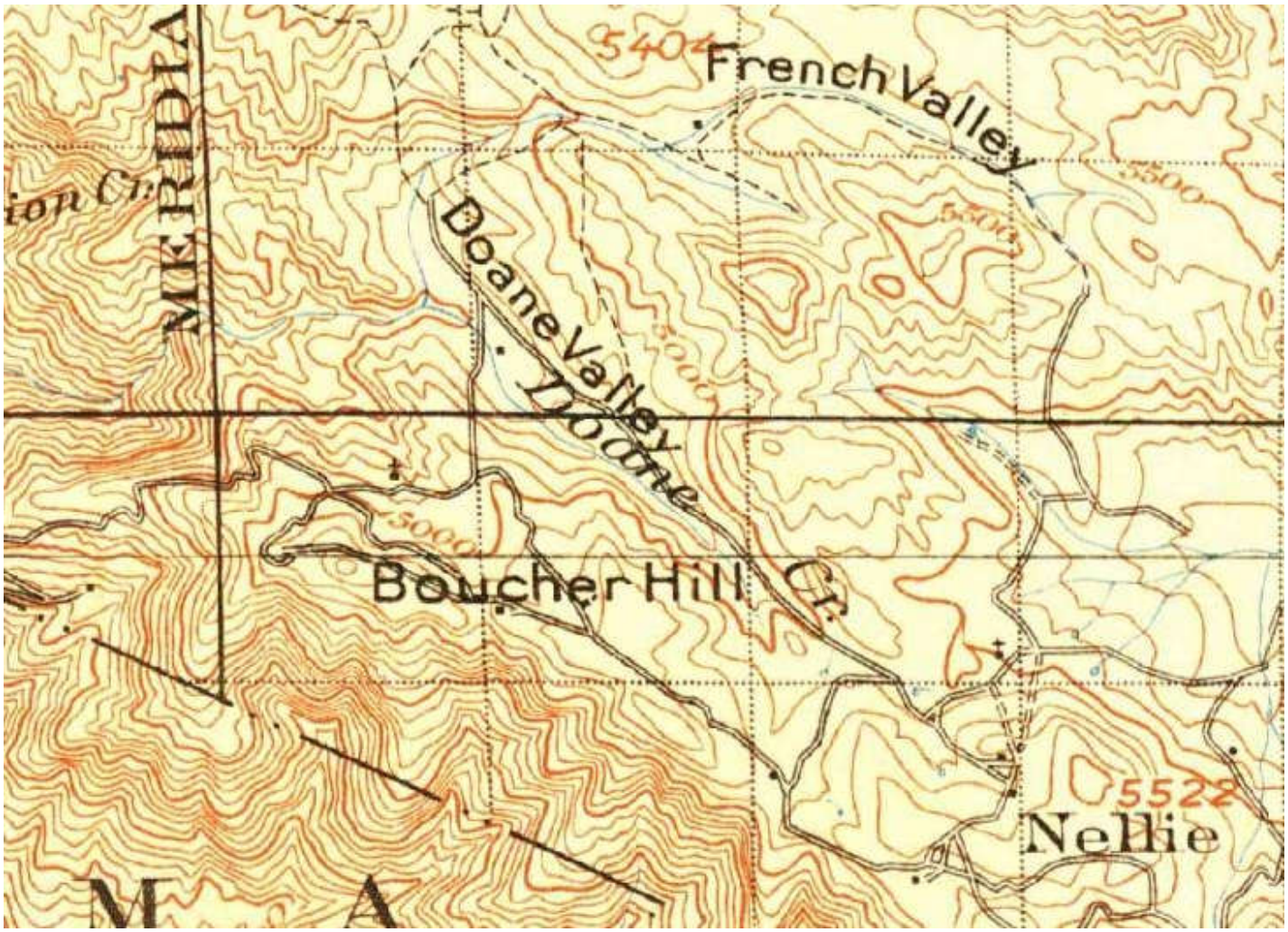
Mrs. R.L. Avery is Laura Belle Pearson's second daughter Xenia Reddy. In the 1926 Prairie Census of Canada, Xenia Avery is listed in Saskatchewan, married to Lester Avery (born in Manitoba in 1892/1893). In the 1931 Census of Canada, Xenia is listed as the wife of Lester Avery, machinist, living in Regina City, Saskatchewan, Canada, and having immigrated to Canada in 1917. Mrs. Xenia Avery is a housewife listed next to Ralph L. Avery, machinist, in the "List of Electors, 1935" for the electoral district of Regina City, Saskatchewan, Canada. Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Avery were voters living in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada in 1957 and 1958.

John Richard Reddy gravestone at Mountain View Cemetery, Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada
Findagrave ID 104465307

Laura Belle Pearson Reddy Nerz gravestone at Turlock Memorial Part, Turlock, California
Findagrave ID 55785291

WHEN DID BOUGHER HILL BECOME BOUCHER HILL?

The United States Geological Survey's 1903 Ramona map seems to have started the misspelling of Bougher Hill as Boucher Hill.



1903 U.S.G.S. Ramona map

Leland Fetzer's book "San Diego County Place Names, A to Z" (San Diego: Sunbelt Publications, 2005) stated:

> The spelling of the (Boucher) hill's name probably reflects the pronunciation of the family name. USGS mapmakers seem to have obtained their place name information from interviews, not from printed sources.

In spite of the mapmakers' misspelling as Boucher as early as 1903, there were correct spellings as Bougher Hill or Bougher Point in various sources in the following years though gradually diminishing.

Boucher/Bougher Hill has other misspelled companion placenames on Palomar Mountain, specifically Colb Valley for William Jasper Kolb, and Parayne Hill for twin brothers Jean Bertrand and Jean Louis Peyregne.

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7= Weekly San Diegan-Sun, February 11, 1904, page 6, column 3
8= San Diego Weekly Union, June 14, 1900, page 21, column 5
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13= Escondido Times, February 8, 1894, page 3, column 3
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15= San Diego Union, June 8, 1899, page 5, column 2
16= Escondido Times, July 26, 1894, page 3, column 3
17= San Diego Sun, January 28, 1897, page 2, column 1
18= San Diego Union, September 8, 1896, page 2, column 1
19= Weekly San Diegan-Sun, June 10, 1897, page 4, column 6. WH Pearson ne qr of se qr of sec 6, tp 10s, r 1e; WE Bougher nw qr of ne qr of sec 6, tp 10s, r 1e
20= San Diegan-Sun, November 11, 1897, page 6, column 2
21= San Diego Union, September 1897, page 5, column 3
22= San Diego Union, December 15, 1898, page 5, column 3
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24= San Diego Union, September 15, 1898, page 6, column 2
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26= Riverside Morning Enterprise, September 24, 1899, page 8, column 2
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35= San Diegan-Sun, October 28, 1905, page 7, column 2
36= San Diego Sun, November 20, 1906, page 7, column 2
37= San Diegan-Sun, February 7, 1908, page 3, column 4
38= The Advocate (Escondido), December 29, 1905, page 8, column 2
39= The Advocate (Escondido), June 29, 1906, page 6, column 1 and column 2
40= The Advocate (Escondido), July 27, 1906, page 3, column 3
41= Escondido Times, June 21, 1907, page 6, column 3
42= National City News, April 30, 1910, page 1, column 5
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44= San Diego Weekly Union, June 1, 1911, page 10, column 1
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49= Escondido Advocate, November 29, 1918, page 7, column 3
50= Escondido Times Advocate, March 1, 1919, page 4, column 5
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